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Partner

TEACH
South Africa

TEACH contributes towards a higher pass rate

Gauteng's Matric Class of 2010 managed to score a 78.6% pass rate despite the Fifa World Cup and a prolonged public servants' strike. The pass rate was a 7.1% increase from that of 2009 and TEACH South Africa believes that their TEACH Ambassadors – university or tertiary graduates committed to a two-year period of teaching service at disadvantaged schools – contributed to this success.

At Erasmus Monareng High School in the East Rand, for instance, the 2009 matric pass rate stood at 66.1%. In 2010, it rose to 76.3%. TEACH Ambassador Meurial Magaya was placed in the school to teach physical science. When she arrived, she was faced with the challenge of providing practical lessons within an under-resourced science laboratory.

Despite this, Portia Monaheng, a student of Magaya's, raised her physical science mark from 40% in 2009 to 69% the following year. Monaheng grew up in Vosloorus where she witnessed emotional and physical abuse. While attending Erasmus Monareng, she found solace and support in Magaya, finally achieving a

university entrance in matric, becoming the first in her family to achieve such an accolade. "Each term Meurial offered a reward of R100 to anyone who achieved the highest physical science mark – this definitely motivated most of us to work harder in the subject. Besides the rewards, Meurial gave of her time. She would give us extra lessons in the morning and after school; she was always approachable and would be glad to answer any questions on issues we didn't quite understand. Meurial is such a happy person and used to tell us stories relating to her personal journey, which made me think 'if she could do it, then so could I'."

Magaya taught Monaheng in Grade 11 and 12. Last year, Monaheng achieved a university entrance pass. "I believe there is a great difference between those that passed physical science in 2010 and those that passed before Meurial Magaya! I love her very much and if I see her again I would encourage her to do what she is doing as she is a blessing to those who know her," concluded Monaheng. Magaya too was impressed with the improvement in her students' performance

over her two years at Erasmus Monareng, although she believes it was a result of a joint effort between the learners and herself as a TEACH Ambassador. "It is not a one-way street – when learners put in their maximum effort you are motivated to give more of yourself." Asked whether TEACH Ambassadors have a place in the current education system Magaya responded: "60% of those learners that qualified for a university entrance in my school in 2010 were from my classes, they were science learners, which makes me wonder what impact there would have been if there were more TEACH Ambassadors in schools."

Richard Masemola, Director of TEACH South Africa, believes that the improvement in the quality of education in economically disadvantaged communities ultimately results in the upliftment of communities – the ripple effect of which cannot be underestimated. "Motivated learners are more likely to succeed in every aspect of their lives, including as employees/workers," commented Masemola.

For further details/articles on educational partnerships to be published contact:

Mapule Ramasedi, Partnership Unit
111 Commissioner Street, Johannesburg
P.O. Box 7710,
Johannesburg 2000

Tel.: 011 355 0028
Fax: 011 355 0670
E-mail: mapule.ramasedi@gauteng.gov.za